

23. (Added) The method as recited in claim 16, wherein the work piece is a semiconductor wafer.

24. (Added) The method as recited in claim 16, further comprising reporting completion of said transferring, wherein said updating is performed in response to said reporting.

REMARKS

Claims 23 and 24 have been added. Claims 16-24 will be pending in the application upon entry of this amendment. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Section 103(a) Rejection:

The Office Action rejected claims 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harada et al. (U.S. Patent 4,781,511) (hereinafter "Harada") in view of Sims et al. (U.S. Patent 5,434,775) (hereinafter "Sims"). As set forth in more detail below, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In response to Applicants' previous argument that the tracking device of Sims is not suitable for tracking the semiconductor wafer work pieces of Harada, the Examiner argues in the Final Action that the tracking device of Sims, or other prior art tag-tracking devices, could be used to track the semiconductor wafer work pieces of Harada by placing the tracking devices upon the containers used to transport the work pieces. However, this approach would successfully track only the container's location, not the work piece's location. For example, if one attempted to track semiconductor wafer work pieces 7 in Harada by attaching a tracking device to wafer cassette 6, the tracking device would not follow the movement of the work pieces 7 from one fabrication area to another. Referring to Harada's Figure 3, assume a wafer cassette 6 with a tracking device

was loaded into port 28 of the wafer processing equipment 20. After the wafers 7 had been processed and moved to a different wafer cassette at port 30, the tracking device would incorrectly indicate that the work pieces were still located at port 28. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not use a tag-tracking device (such as in Sims and the other cited art) to track the location of the semiconductor wafer work pieces of Harada.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Claims 19-22 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but otherwise allowable if rewritten in independent form. In light of the above remarks, Applicants assert that claims 19-22 are allowable as depending from a patentably distinct base claim. Applicants therefore respectfully request allowance of claims 19-22 as currently pending.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit the application is in condition for allowance, and notice to that effect is requested.

If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge said fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert, & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505/5000-83702/RCK.

Also enclosed herewith are the following items:

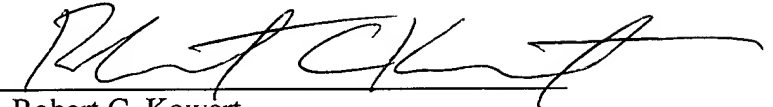
- ☒ Return Receipt Postcard
- ☐ Petition for Extension of Time
- ☐ Request for Approval of Drawing Changes
- ☐ Notice of Change of Address
- ☐ Marked-up Copy of Amended Claims

☐ Marked-up Copy of Amended Paragraphs

☐ Fee Authorization Form authorizing a deposit account debit in the amount of \$
for fees ().

☐ Other:

Respectfully submitted,



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